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"BOOK BURNING" ON THE LEFT

By VICTOR LASKY

FORGIVE ME while I wipe away a tear; Edgar Snow has just written the *New York Times* complaining that his books have been "burned" in U.S. overseas libraries, all because of the antics of "McCarthy's child-wonder thought-police". (Why those who most emphatically object to "smears" come up with bigger smears is something for the Ford Foundation to subsidize a psychiatrist to discover.) Snow, whom no one can accuse of ever having written one book offensive to the bully boys in the Kremlin, claims in the *Times* (where else?) that several of his books "are listed now by the Army War College as recommended reading for general officers — to whom the Cohn-Schine purge has not yet extended".

If one of the listed books is Snow's *Stalin Must Have Peace,* I can readily understand why U.S. officers, presumably studying the enemy's strategy, might be advised to read it. For, as the book jacket says, "Edgar Snow states Russia's case boldly and objectively".

I must assume that U.S. officers must have also given close study to *Mein Kampf,* Hitler's blueprint to seize the world, during World War II. But during that unpleasantness, I don't seem to recall Elmer Davis, as head of the Office of War Information, shipping Hitler's or Gerald L. K. Smith's poison propaganda to our overseas showcases of democracy to demonstate, in Davis' recent words assailing "book burning", that "we're not afraid of controversial ideas".

Indeed, had Elmer Davis put the torch to pro-Nazi books and magazines in the middle of Times Square, the bonfire undoubtedly would have attracted hundreds of thousands of cheering "liberals" now shrieking about books supposedly burned in furnaces stoked by the junior Senator from Wisconsin.

Books were certainly "burned" in Elmer's heyday in New Deal Washington. Yet there was no recorded protest from him — or Edgar Snow, for that matter — when Leon Trotsky's monumental biography of Joe Stalin was suddenly removed from circulation because the publisher had been informed it might do harm to Soviet-American harmony.

Senator Styles Bridges, at the time a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, hearing that the Library of Congress had a copy securely locked up in a safe, put in a request to see Trotsky's book. The next day Bridges was visited by Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long, and later by a two-star Pentagon inhabitant, who

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pleaded that any public reference to material in the Trotsky book would be a serious blow to U.S. diplomacy vis-a-vis the Kremlin. The Kremlin, Long said, had indicated it would formally protest any public references to the book. Bridges told Long to inform his superior to inform the President to inform the Kremlin that neither the Kremlin nor the State Department controls the Senate or its members.

Curiously, the Pentagon at the time was sending GI's material critical of General Douglas MacArthur who, presumably, was on our side, too.

This was the hysterical pro-Soviet era when the Pentagon burned intelligence files on Communists; and when vilification greeted the publication of any anti-Red book or work critical of the Roosevelt regime.

EVEN BEFORE THE WAR, when Gen. Walter Krivitsky came out with his book detailing his operations as Red spy chief in Western Europe, every effort was made by the Reds and their pals to discredit him. The defunct *PM,* the "liberal" daily financed by Marshall Field, actually published an "exposé" with the anti-Semitic headline: "General Krivitsky: You Are Really Shmelka Ginsburg!" Eventually, Krivitsky was found dead, under still-unexplained circumstances, in a dingy Washington hotel room.

Several years later the publication of Jan Valtin's *Out of the Night,* an autobiographical account of life in the Soviet underworld, was given the *PM* treatment. *PM* sent out a sleuth, to find something on Valtin. He was falsely accused of having been a Nazi. But they got many people to believe this; and before long, certain New Deal immigration authorities joined in a plot to have Valtin deported to certain death in Nazi Germany, a plot which fortunately failed.

But the biggest book-lynching spree took place in early 1945 when William L. White wrote *Report On The Russians,* an account of his wartime trip to Russia with Eric Johnston. Even before publication, *Pravda's* David Zaslavsky (whatever became of him?) called it "a mess of Fascist garbage" and Bennett Cerf, who may know better now, predicted it would be "the worst book of the year".

Joe Barnes, in the *Herald-Tribune,* called the book "a travesty"; John Hersey, "insulting"; Maurice Hindus, "irresponsible"; and *Foreign Affairs,* "distorted".

The *New Republic's* Bruce Bliven warned that by discussing Soviet slave labor, White had "made their lot worse". Bliven had never refrained from discussing Nazi slave labor. Bennett Cerf said "it is such prejudiced reports that have made Soviet censors so eternally suspicious of foreign correspondents". So, Soviet censorship was all our fault!

But the left-wing vigilante campaign to suppress the book did not stop with reviews; the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, the Red's most successful sucker operation, published a 32-page brochure on "the book the Nazis like". It con-

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tained a petition by 16 top writers — you'd be amazed at their names — who condemned White for writing an anti-Soviet book.

One of these self-appointed book-burners was none other than Edgar Snow, now fuming that having his books removed from libraries set up to fight Communism — what were they doing there in the first place? — "can be seriously damaging to one's professional as well as personal interests".

Snow has never apologized for the damage he and his friends did to Bill White's personal and professional interests. I wonder if Snow has ever been awakened at night to be told over the phone that he was a "fascist beast!" Ordinarily prolific, White — as a result of the almost-successful Red campaign to break his spirit — couldn't write a word for a year.

THE HYPOCRISY OF MANY of those currently ranting about "book burning" is best demonstrated by the brethren on the Far Left, currently demanding a Senate investigation of the alleged burning of a Corliss Lamont book called *Soviet Civilization* (is there such a thing?). It seems, according to the *New World Review* that the book was burned by a fascist mob which last April broke up a memorial meeting in Chicago for the beloved Stalin. "As the books burned", reported the *Review,* "they danced and laughed. . . ."

Now, no Chicago newspaper, let alone the Police Department, has any record of this terrible incident. But Lamont, in an advertisement in the *Times,* wailed: "Remember that in Hitler's Germany it started by burning books and ended by burning people. . . ." But, Dr. Lamont, why only Hitler? Why not Stalin, who gave Hitler lessons in burning books — and people?

More recently, this hypocritical attitude was best exemplified with what happened when Doubleday and Company suddenly announced its withdrawal of Earl Jowitt's strange book *The Strange Case of Alger Hiss.* Elmer Davis (here's that man again) went on the air to hint darkly that "pressure" from the right-wing might have forced Doubleday to remove the book.

"Not surprisingly", reported Merle Miller, writing in the August 3 *New Republic,* "a number of panicky civil libertarians immediately assumed the book had been suppressed. The Author's Guild was asked to protest the entrance of McCarthyism into the book publishing business, and there were those who wanted the ACLU to issue a stern statement."

And then Miller added significantly: "Among those who rushed into the non-existent battle were a few unangelic fools who last year had tried to pressure Random House into abandoning its plans for issuing Whittaker Chambers' *Witness,* presumably on the grounds that only certain versions of history should be read. . . ."

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SO, BOOK-BURNING WORKS both ways. Walter White, head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who recently screeched about the "banning" of his book from the shelves of overseas libraries, several years ago demanded the banning of a scholarly American history textbook from the schools on the grounds that it was "anti-Negro". Peculiarly, one of the book's authors was none other than Professor Henry Steele Commager who, although constantly denouncing "witch-hunts", never seemed to object to having his book removed from use from at least one school, Queens College, because of the NAACP protest.

Some Jewish groups have even demanded the banning of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* from the schools on grounds that it is "anti-Semitic". The American Jewish Congress actually kept *Oliver Twist* off the nation's screens for several years because of an "offensive" characterization of Fagin; at the same time, this group demanded "freedom of the screen" for *The Miracle,* a film many Catholics considered "offensive". You figure that one out. Catholic groups also have objected to certain books.

And so it goes.

Yet, when anti-American books are removed from libraries abroad set up for the sole purpose of selling our way of life, such learned educators as Professor Howard Mumord Jones blow a gasket. Professor Jones, who was an honored leader of the Soviet-American Friendship Society, which led the lynching spree against Bill White, recently wrote a letter to the *New York Times,* in which he complained about the banning overseas of books by Edgar Snow, Howard Fast and Dashiell Hammett. He asked: "What harm in any way, shape or manner can come to a German from reading . . . the poems of Langston Hughes?" One of the poems in question, reads:

> "Good morning, revolution.
> You're the very best friend I ever had
> Put one more S in U.S.A. and
> Make it Soviet."

Conceding that Professor Jones is a better authority on such poetry than I, I submit that Hughes is a better authority than he.

Hughes admitted to McCarthy that his earlier works had followed the Red line. Asked whether he thought they should be used in anti-Red libraries abroad, Hughes replied: "I was certainly amazed to hear that they were. I was surprised; and I would certainly say, 'No!'." Here's one writer who's not opposed to "book-burning", even of his own books.

Victor Lasky, co-author of *Seeds of Treason,* has just completed editing *The American Legion Reader,* for fall publication.

Additional Copies: 6—1.00; 10—1.50; 50—5.50; 100—10.00; 500—15.00; 1,000—25.00. Quotations for larger quantities on request.

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HUMAN EVENTS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN, *Editor* FRANK CHODOROV, *Associate Editor*

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Case of the Plausible Pole: Over a year ago, when General Walter Bedell ("Beetle") Smith (now Undersecretary of State) was chief of the "hush-hush" Central Intelligence Agency, an episode occurred which ever since has titillated the interest of probers on Capitol Hill and, ere long, may splash the headlines.

Some of "Beetle" Smith's bright young men in CIA established contact with a member of the anti-Communist underground in Poland — or so he said he was. The Pole talked so well that he persuaded the "Beetle" Smith crowd that his organization needed approximately a million dollars to finance its activities. Since CIA receives from the Government exchequer and spends each year funds totalling close to a billion, they have such sums to give. The Pole got the money, in cash.

Next, he followed with an eloquent plea for a copy of a super-secret document, without which — he contended — his organization in Poland could not coordinate its efforts with those of the U.S., in event the Soviets launched a drive westward. The code name of this document was "Operation Retardation". In due course of time, this favor was granted to the plausible, irresistible Pole. And then he vanished.

About this time, it began to dawn on some of the brighter young men in CIA that perhaps some investigation of the Pole was in order. They had not to go far. CIA's own files yielded a report, dated some two years previously, identifying the Pole as one of the most notorious agents of the political police of the Communist Government of Poland. The document today is not only in the hands of the Communist Polish Government, but some of its contents have even appeared in Communist newspapers.

By this time, "Beetle's" bright young man in CIA, who was responsible for this mistake, has been released from his duties with that organization. He is said to have obtained a position — yes, you've guessed it — with the Ford Foundation.

Bricker Amendment: The Ohio Senator's measure to protect American sovereignty received a highly important endorsement last week, one which may help it on its way to victory in the next session of Congress.

The American Bar Association convention, biggest event of the year among lawyers, took place in Boston where it listened first to Senator Bricker make a speech, then to Secretary Dulles who attacked the Bricker Amendment — and finally, through its House of Delegates, the policy making body of the ABA, reaffirmed its position of last year supporting the Bricker Amendment. The vote was overwhelming — 117 to 33.

The Bricker Amendment provides that a treaty provision which conflicts with the Constitution shall be invalid and that no treaty shall take effect as internal law in America except after specific legislation has been passed. Likewise the Bricker measure would impose similar restraints on executive agreements with foreign powers and international organizations.

The amendment, which started last session of Congress with a large majority of Senators pledged to support it, was stopped in its course by the Eisenhower Administration. By some clever, delaying tactics the White House managed to put off a showdown on the measure until the last rush to adjourn ended all possibility of a vote.

The Boston convention of the Bar Association also gave the measure further prestige by paying special tribute to Mr. Frank Holman, former President of the ABA. It is to Mr. Holman that much of the momentum of the drive for passage of the Bricker measure is due. The Board of Governors of the ABA rather

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pointedly made its 1953 award to Holman, for his "outstanding contribution" toward the ABA's first objective — "to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States".

[We have taken the trouble to set down these facts because they were either obscured or in some cases reportedly falsified in sections of the press. Some readers tell us that in certain eastern papers there were news reports flatly asserting defeat for the Bricker Amendment at the Boston meeting. The *New York Times* gave an accurate version of the Bricker triumph, but buried it on the 10th page in the middle of a long dispatch from Boston.]

Talk of the Town: Around the State Department, they say that a large part of Secretary Dulles' red-hot speech to the American Legion today, warning Red China against further aggression, was written by Mr. Scott McLeod, Director of Security in the State Department. McLeod, former FBI man, has bounced many security risks since he took office last spring. He is the official who would not give security clearance to Charles E. "Chip" Bohlen, when the latter was named Ambassador to Soviet Russia last winter.

● Vacationists returning to the Capital after a month's absence note one striking feature of the political landscape: Sen. Joe McCarthy, a month ago apparently hard pressed by his enemies, now is riding high and virtually uncriticized in the public forum. His exposure of the Communists in the Government Printing Office has made a deep impression.

● On Capitol Hill, recently growing fears that the GOP will lose the 1954 Congressional elections have been lightened by the prospect of internal Democratic strife. The coming Democratic pow-wow in Chicago may give Harry Truman a chance to push himself into the political scene. (When the ex-President visited Washington early this summer, he was reportedly impatient to get back into the political ring.)

If Truman does so, then Adlai Stevenson — as present head of the Party — will again suffer the embarrassments of a year ago, when Truman insisted on "getting into the act". Many political sages believe that the decisive element in the GOP victory was a popular revolt against Truman and Trumanism. Hence, Truman in 1954 may again prove the GOP's best asset.

Are House Expenses Deductible? The famous ladies of Marshall, Texas, who refused to withhold "social security" taxes from the wages of their servants, and had their bank accounts (total $55.71) impounded by the U.S. Treasury, lost out recently in their case before the Court of Appeals. As our contemporary, John O'Donnell, points out in an article in the *New York Daily News*, the embattled housewives are elated by this loss, for it enables them to take the matter to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the constitutionality of the withholding provision of the income tax law will be settled; this is what ex-Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder tried so desperately to prevent in the case of Vivien Kellems.

The decision of Appellate Judge Joseph G. Hutchinson gives a new turn to the case, one that will add to the difficulties of the Supreme Court. In his written opinion he declares: "a home is essentially the same as a business for tax purposes". The belligerent ladies say "fine". A business may include in its expenses, for tax computation, its telephone, rent, upkeep, toilet supplies, entertainment bills, stationary, purchases of furniture and a lot of other things that go to make a home a home. If, for tax purposes, "a home is essentially the same as a business", then the cost of appurtenances and upkeep of a home ought to be deductible from income in computing one's taxes. How about it?

Jenner Reports: One of the most striking Capitol phenomena of the past week has been the avalanche of orders for copies of the Jenner Committee's report on Soviet spy rings inside Government. Employees of the Post Office in the Senate Office Building remark that they have never seen anything like it. Why this response?

The wide public interest is perhaps largely due to the favorable, front page treatment given to the release of the document. But why did the press belatedly recognize a picture which piecemeal had been often given to the public before, but had been dismissed as a "red herring"? Perhaps because the present job of presentation is superlatively done and very comprehensive.

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Despite its extraordinary value, the report is incomplete and it is probable that the committee fully realized this. In the report they traced the rise to power in our Government of the agents of the Soviet network and identified them with great precision in the exact jobs which they occupied. But the question remains — what did the conspirators do in those jobs before they were exposed and expelled? What policies did they establish and are these policies still operating in our Government to the detriment of the national interest?

For instance, the report shows how Alger Hiss created and staffed the United Nations section of the State Department. But what is the situation today? Around the town, it is said that the old Hiss appointees are still in the State Department — and it is now a commonplace that the members of the international organization (which Hiss helped set up) are now "ganging up", in an overwhelming majority, against the United States. Was it originally planned this way? That's a question which the Jenner Committee may well seek to answer in coming months.

Who Do You Know: Or, should it be whom? Anyhow, you know at least one person who ought to be reading HUMAN EVENTS. Send us his name and address, so that we may contact him. A hundred names would be better. (We promise not to mention your name in writing prospects.)

Multiplying Dollars: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported last week that the Consumers Price Index had hit an all-time high in mid-July. At that time the "cost of living" average was 114.7 percent of the 1947-49 figure. Since the wage level had also gone up, somewhat above the level of prices, the news is not alarming. But, the question that bothers prognosticating economists is: are we in for another inflationary spiral? This quandary may be resolved if we look to the cause of the rising C. of L.

Prices go up when there is (1) a shortage of goods or (2) an increase of dollars, either specie or the checkbook kind. It is hardly necessary to point out that the stores are plentifully supplied with goods. Therefore, the solution of the present inflationary problem must lie in the realm of money. Where did this new money come from?

During the past four years an increasing number of "savings" bonds have been maturing. These were the bonds issued "to pay for the war", and the government stipulated that they could not be sold or used as collateral for loans; the buyer had to keep them until maturity or redeem them with the government. That was to "prevent inflation".

The government is asking the bondholders, now that maturity date is rolling around, to take replacement bonds, with higher interest rates. However, a great many citizens are demanding their money; maybe because they find other investment opportunities more attractive. The government has to dig up the money. So, it issues negotiable bonds, bonds that the financial institutions will take. These new bonds can be monetized — that is, they can be used to create checkbook money, which is as spendable as specie. Thus, the cause for the rising of C. of L. index is the new purchasing power thrown into the market by the government's fiscal maneuvers.

HUMAN EVENTS, in May, 1950, published an article called "Bonds Bursting in Air", in which the writer predicted that the maturing "savings" bonds would do exactly what is now happening. Between 1949 and 1959, the article pointed out, some $57 billion of these bonds would come due; the big pull would come in 1953-54, when the Treasury would have to face up to over $15 billion of these homecoming obligations. The present boost in prices (inflation) is resulting from the "manufactured" money that the government is resorting to because the public is not absorbing all the new "savings" bonds. Will the rise continue? What reason have we to believe that the public will take more avidly to government securities that, despite the element of safety, pay less than non-government securities, which have the added attraction of possible appreciation? Inflation was written into our present economy by the bonds issued during the war.

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Russia: What Next? By Isaac Deutscher. New York: Oxford University Press. $3.00. Reviewed by William Henry Chamberlin.

Ex-Communists who have fully broken with Communism have made most valuable contributions to our knowledge of the nature and extent of the Communist threat. No one has shown the sheer horror and evil of Communism so vividly and eloquently as Whittaker Chambers. One finds the best Who's Who of Communist spies and traitors in the books of Chambers, Elizabeth Bentley, Hede Massing, Benjamin Gitlow and others. The ex-Communist Franz Borkenau has supplied some of the best analyses of international Communist strategy; the ex-Communist Elinor Lipper has written one of the best personal experience accounts of Soviet slave labor.

Isaac Deutscher is an ex-Communist, but an ex-Communist with a difference. He was expelled from the Polish Communist Party as a Trotskyist. And there is no common ground between Trotskyism and a philosophy of freedom. As is evident both in his biography of Stalin and in the present book, Deutscher retains many Marxist and Leninist prepossessions which make him an unreliable guide in the labyrinth of Soviet contemporary politics.

He consistently exaggerates the "barbarism" of pre-Bolshevik Russia and just as consistently underestimates the cruelty of Soviet rule. He makes the amazing statement: "Before the Stalin era Bolshevism, *in its aspirations and outlook, towered above its native Russian environment.*" *This overlooks the depth* of western humanist culture in Russia, which was plucked out by its roots by the Communists, and also the very unfavorable contrast which has always existed between the Tsarist regime (tyrannical as it was) and the Soviet dictatorship on such tests as numbers of persons executed and held in slave labor camps.

Stalin's methods are a little too much even for Mr. Deutscher to swallow, and he hails Malenkov, on extremely scanty evidence, as the pioneer of an era of liberal reform. Yet even Stalin gets his tribute; did he not lead Russia from the wooden plow to the atomic stockpile? Here again the author, in his Marxist dogmatism, overlooks the plain evidence of historical facts; never in history was there such a discrepancy between figures of industrial output and the daily living standard of the people.

In the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the author represents the Soviet empire, embracing one third of the population and resources of the globe as growing "by its own accord . . . while the supposed master-builder suffered frequent bouts of absent-mindedness." Stalin, in whatever unearthly realm he may be at present, would certainly grin with cynical amusement at this artless disparagement of the element of plan, calculation and design in his revolutionary empire-building.

Where Deutscher becomes not only an unreliable, but a positively dangerous counsellor on foreign policy for the western powers, is in the concluding section of the book. Here he represents the Malenkov regime as holding out an olive branch of peace. Should this be rejected as a result of American intransigence and substitution of "liberation" for "containment", then, Deutscher warns, a Soviet Bonaparte will arise and sweep the Atlantic.

A neater formula justifying new Munichs and Yaltas and the abandonment of all the demands contained in President Eisenhower's April speech (unity of Germany and Korea under free institutions, independence of Eastern Europe from Soviet domination) could scarcely be imagined. And the whole theory of Malenkov as a dove of peace rests on the most fragile and uncertain evidence. On its record so far the Soviet peace offensive has been mainly concerned with sowing apples of discord among the Western powers. And no one really knows whether Malenkov is running the show in Moscow, or how long he will be running it. This is a book to take with very large pinches of salt.

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